

From: Terri-A White/R3/USEPA/US
Sent: 2/24/2012 6:06:45 PM
To: "Thomas Shepstone" <tom@eidmarcellus.org>
CC:
BCC: Terri-A White
Subject: Re: Fwd: Your Request for Interview w/EPA

Hi Tom,

I am providing you an EPA statement and an EPA letter; both are responsive to the questions you have posed. As I explained in an earlier message, our preference is to respond in writing to inquiries regarding EPA's work in Dimock. We are not granting on-camera interviews. -- Terri

Since EPA announced on January 19 our plan to sample wells in Dimock, Pennsylvania, and provide alternate water supplies to four homes, we have been clear and forthright about the basis of our actions and acknowledged that uncertainties about the data made available to the Agency existed. We acknowledged that the data available to us was incomplete and of uncertain quality, and based on this, determined the need to conduct sampling of wells. Nevertheless, there were data items that presented sufficient health concerns, leading us to offer alternate water to a handful of the residents. EPA's standard practice when conducting investigations ensures the protection of public health, as our analysis considers the highest levels to which the public may be exposed. Additional, validated data is needed to fill information gaps and develop a sound scientific basis for assessing the need for further action.

Cabot has criticized EPA for providing alternate water supplies to four homes in Dimock. We took this precautionary and limited step as an interim measure to be protective of human health while monitoring is underway. Cabot has also characterized the presence of certain chemicals, such as arsenic, manganese, and sodium as naturally occurring. This is misleading, since although these chemicals are naturally occurring in Susquehanna County, the levels of arsenic, manganese and sodium found in the Dimock area are not consistent with background concentrations typically found in the zones from which Dimock home owners draw water for their private wells. Nevertheless, EPA did not act on sodium as a basis for providing alternate water. However, the arsenic and manganese levels, when reviewed by an EPA toxicologist, were at levels high enough to present a health concern, supporting the need for alternate water.

Beginning on January 10, Cabot began submitting data in response to the Agency's request of January 6. EPA is reviewing that data which consists of approximately tens of thousands of pages of records pertaining to the site. Until that point, Cabot had not provided EPA any data. We plan to carefully consider it, along with the results of our own sampling, in determining next steps. Meanwhile, we will work with Cabot to get any additional information that will help us interpret the data they have given us.

As stated in EPA's January 19 Action Memorandum, which formally initiated our response in Dimock, "EPA will continue to evaluate the updated data, and may revise its actions to provide water to any of the additional homes, or to cease provision of water, as warranted by the data." We are, therefore, focused on obtaining results in an expeditious manner and acting on them.

From: Thomas Shepstone <tom@eidmarcellus.org>
To: Terri-A White/R3/USEPA/US@EPA
Date: 02/23/2012 11:21 PM
Subject: Fwd: Your Request for Interview w/EPA

Terri,

It's now been 10 days since we sent you, by e-mail and Federal Express, the attached questions you requested, along with our formal request for an equal opportunity to interview an EPA official on-camera in the manner Trish Taylor did with media and representatives of anti-gas organizations. Can you tell us where things stand with respect to both of these - our questions and our interview request? When can we expect answers?

Thank you!

consistent in responding to all inquiries in writing. If you are requesting comment from EPA, please send me your questions and I will get back to you. -- Terri

Terri A. White
Press Officer
EPA Region 3

[attachment "Terri White EPA Letter.pdf" deleted by Terri-A White/R3/USEPA/US]

- Cabot.pdf